DIRECT ACTION!

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Working Under Assessment

-Anonymous Fellow Worker

G'day,
My name is whatever you would like it to be. I am a person with a physical disability, and I work in a factory. It is not an unpleasant place to work, and I enjoy the company of most of the people I work with and/or for. Some of the work is fairly light and some of it is nothing short of exhausting. That's fine with me; I have never shied away from a hard day's work. I have worked at this particular factory for around six years.

I work under the conditions of an award called the "Assisted Employment Award", which was once called the "Sheltered Workshop Award", and before that, the "Basket Weavers Award"- at least to my understanding. I may be incorrect, but I am confident that I am not. Instead of being paid the same minimum wage, I am paid a percentage of this award according to how fast I work and how productive I am. The company I work for hires private assessors who come into the factory periodically and watch each of us at work for a couple of hours. We are usually assessed around once a year, although I believe that recently this has changed to once every two years.

Essentially, after being observed by an assessor, they then compare my output and efforts against what they believe a fully abled person would achieve under the same circumstances and allocate me with a percentage. For example, a worker may be assessed at 63%, that is, deemed as capable of producing 63% of what a fully abled person may produce, and therefore is paid 63% of the award. Workers are not allowed to disclose their results to each other, but of course many of us do.

Many workers receive some form of government payment due to the nature of their disabilities, which they are eligible for even though they are drawing an income from the factory. This is often used as an excuse to justify the process.

Workers may dispute the decision and ask for a reassessment, but the result of that reassessment may be locked in as the rate they will receive indefinitely. Also, any worker refusing to sign paperwork that puts the payment process in motion because they are unhappy with their result, cannot be paid their income until they do so. An option to declare that you disagree with your result does appear on the final paperwork, but nothing happens until you sign, and once you have, such options are little more than tokenistic.

When I first learned I was to be assessed and then paid a percentage of an award wage based on my output, I, of course, questioned why all workers were not just paid the legal minimum wage. I exclaimed that this was basically akin to a type of piecework system for disabled workers. I have heard stories of people with a disability being paid as little as $2-$3 an hour under this system. The first time I was assessed my results were quite good, but I still came in at below the legal minimum wage. I argued with the factory manager who was trying to make me see that I was not in such a bad position financially when you put my disability support pension and wages together. My argument, however, was that it caused me considerable moral dilemma to sign a piece of paper declaring that I agreed to work for below the legal Australian minimum wage because, in essence, such practices drive down wages across the board. I remember trying to make them understand, that if we as disabled workers could be hired for sub-standard wages, we could be used as a "Well at least you're not those guys" excuse for other factories and workplaces looking to keep their wages as low as possible. I tried to explain how much against my principles it felt to have to sign that paperwork knowing full-well I would have no income if I did not. Eventually, after half an hour or so of back-and-forth, I signed with an X. Signing with an X is perfectly legal, I explained to them, and that I had done it because I could not stomach my name being in print on that paperwork.

Basically, an assessor will come to your work and tell you who they are and what they are there for. You are supposed to be told when you are about to be assessed some days prior, but this is not always the case. Then, you may be asked to perform a task that is not necessarily your strong point. I always make the assessor aware of the numerous tasks I can perform, as it works in my favour to do so.
They sit quietly with a clipboard and then the starter's gun goes off - that is: they tell you to start and off you go, working as fast and hard as you can, while they assess your pace and output, and document any mistakes you may make.
A few days later, you get your results. This often culminates in verbal conflict -sometimes heated - among some workers, as a small percentage of those gaining higher results may seek to rub it in the face of others. Also, a worker's results are not made known to them through the assessor, but through their immediate supervisor. Workers have no contact with an assessor after their assessment, obviously done to avoid conflicts if a worker is unhappy with their result. I personally once received an assessment result which I saw as nothing short of insulting and demanded to be allowed to speak to my assessor, but it was not an option.

Another eventuality sees workers who pride themselves on their work-ethic, ability, and output, receiving a lower percentage than they expected and feeling used, unappreciated, ripped-off, and sometimes angry when they believe others have been shown favouritism. Others, feeling duped by the procedure, will adopt an attitude of, "Well, if I'm seen as being only worth 60% of a fully abled person, from now on this place only gets 60% effort out of me." This is probably the most common outcome that I have witnessed personally.

The division in the workplace caused by everybody being on different rates of pay does rear its head sometimes, but eventually arguments burn out, people get tired, and relegate themselves to their lot. I believe at least some of that tiredness, coupled with a creeping defeatism, are pseudo-emotional states born of the original sense of powerlessness and bruising of dignity which the original assessment process fosters. In essence, the process deflates self-confidence and self-worth - two essentials one may need in order to go up against such a system in the first place - and the final blow, as always, is apathy.

The strangest part of this method/process is that we, as disabled workers, are told that we are being compared to an "abled worker", and of course, the immediate thought or question is, "Who?? What abled worker? What is their name? Where do they work?" Questions like this may be answered with well-worn cliches such as, "It's complicated." I would suggest to anyone being served up such an answer to say, "That's all the more reason to explain it to me clearly, isn't it?"

This 'mystery' abled worker we are pitted against in our efforts to gain a percentage of what they are supposed to have achieved, does not exist. We are up against the results of performance analysis, production unit theory, and arbitrary numbers pulled in from space: a myth built on the foundations of untruth. I am being expected to keep up with, work as hard as, and ultimately be compared to the abilities of a phantom.

Thank you for reading and showing an interest in this situation that is a daily reality for thousands of the poorest and most vulnerable blue-collar Australians.

By Anonymous Fellow Worker

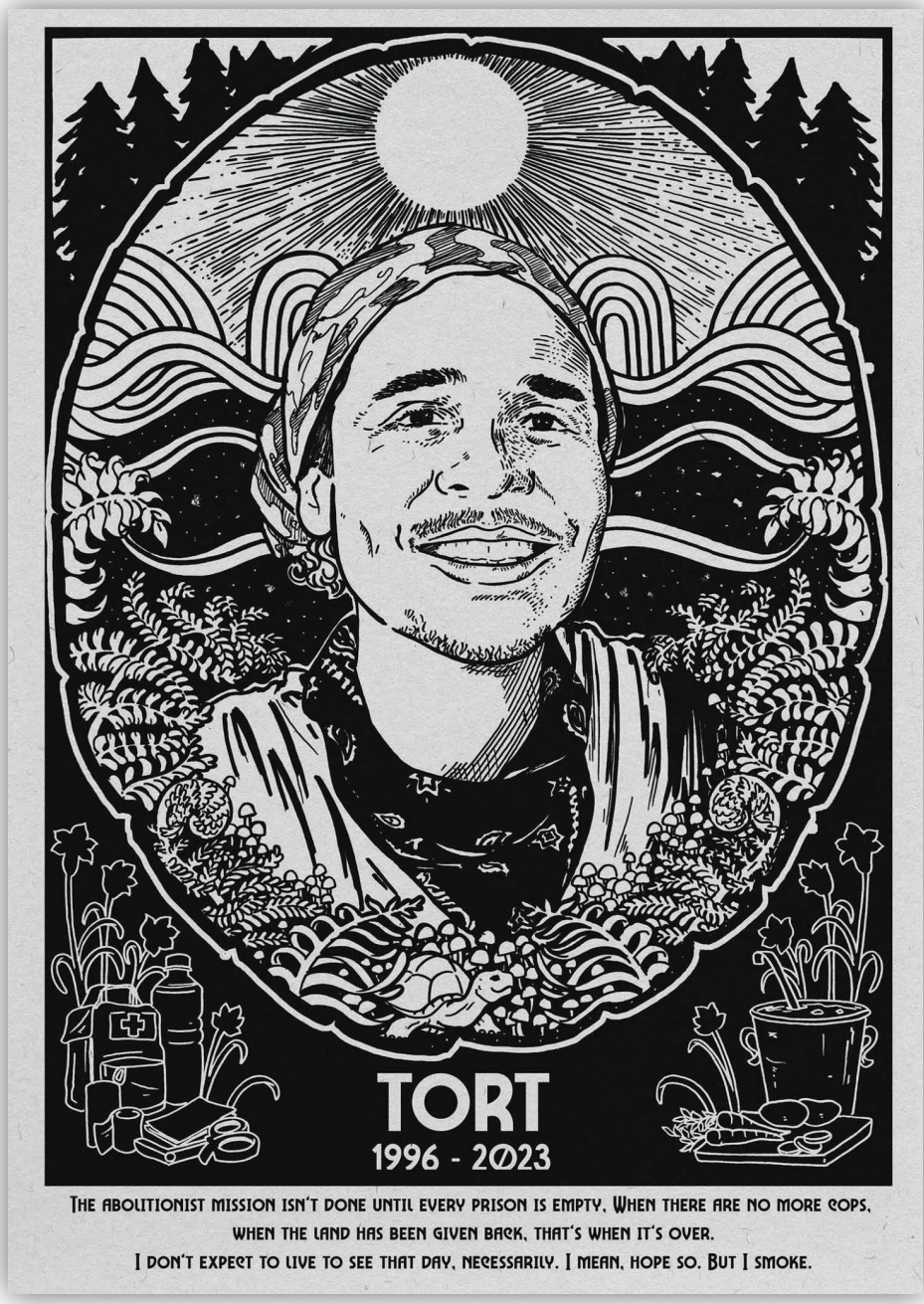
Rest In Power Tortiguita

-Capy Bara & Chuck Molotov

Stop Cop City, Defend the Atlanta Forest!

In early 2021 it was revealed that the Atlanta and Dekalb Counties in Atlanta, Georgia, USA were planning an enormous deforestation project. They were planning to clear 300 acres of the South River Forest, known by the indigenous Muscogee Creek people as the Weelaunee Forest, to build the largest police training facility in the country. Additionally, they were planning to give 170 acres of forest in a land swap to film production company Blackhall Studios (now rebranded as 'Shadowbox Studios') to build the largest movie soundstage in the country. This project was supported by the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Police Foundation, a police advocacy non-profit organisation. It was also sponsored by several corporations that operate in the city, including Coca Cola, Delta Airlines, UPS, Chic-Fil-A, Home Depot and local media corporation Cox Enterprises.

Atlanta is known as a city in a forest, having more tree coverage than any other US city. The forest cools the city and its inhabitants, prevents flooding, and provides a home to its non-human population. Not only will the project accelerate climate change, it will intensify its effects on those living in the subtropical city. The timing of the decision to build what has been dubbed 'Cop City' is unlikely a coincidence. It came shortly after the George Floyd Rebellion of 2020, the largest anti-police uprising in American history, and had an international impact. Clearly, they want to bolster the police force to crush dissent in a city that already suffers from over-policing and over-incarceration.



The abolitionist mission isn't done until every prison is empty. When there are no more cops, when the land has been given back, that's when it's over.
I don't expect to live to see that day, necessarily. I mean, hope so. But I smoke.

Georgia state has the 4th highest incarceration rate in the country, with one percent of Atlanta's residents are either incarcerated, under house arrest or on probation. In addition to state oppression, Atlanta's working class are suffering from gentrification. Its largely black population is being priced out of their neighbourhoods, and inequality and economic hardship has accelerated since the pandemic. The city's reaction to increasing inequality is to increase its capacity to enforce it. In turn, the police need gentrification and inequality to guarantee arrests.

The movie and television industry have also fuelled this oppressive system. In recent years, Atlanta has been attracting the film industry through tax incentives and other accommodations. The increase in Hollywood professionals working and living in Atlanta has significantly increased the price of housing and rent. In addition, the industry has had a long-standing good relationship with law enforcement. Due to various factors, movies and television shows have such an overwhelmingly positive and misleading portrayal of police that it has its own term: Copaganda.

In response to the cop city project, people within Atlanta and across the country have risen in opposition. The movement, known as both 'Stop Cop City' and 'Defend the Atlanta Forest', is a diverse, decentralised resistance movement. It has no leadership structure, and people are free to participate in the movement on their own terms. Because of Atlanta's unique geography, the movement has formed a unique synthesis of forest eco-defence and urban protest.
The movement also allows for a wide range of tactics and strategies, such as mass movement and direct action, militant defence, and community events. Tactics have included disinvestment campaigns, history lessons, school excursions, music festivals, vandalism, street marches, skill shares, tree-sitting, encampments, a legal campaign, jail support and blockades.
These tactics create a PR disaster for the state, an economic disincentive to the project's supporters and directly stops anyone from destroying the forest. The simultaneous use of these tactics has overwhelmed the state's ability to effectively suppress the movement and win over the public.

Activists have kept the state on the backfoot from the beginning, when they discovered the project while digging through open-source records. Records that Atlanta's political and corporate elite were hoping would remain unseen until it was too late to stop them. Because of this, the movement was able to frame the public narrative first. Additionally, the movement has done a brilliant job of dealing with corporate media. Like most workers, journalists are often overworked, and naturally look for the path of least resistance. If all they get from one side is silence and intimidating images of people dressed in all black, and the police hand them an entire story in the form of interviews and police press releases, it is easy to see why the mainstream narrative supports the police. The movement has people able to guide journalists through their encampments, and others with specialised knowledge that can give long, in-depth interviews and press releases. With very few exceptions, the movement has avoided the in-fighting that often occurs in other broad tent movements. By not accepting a framework of 'good protestors' and 'bad protestors', 'radicals' and 'moderates', they focus the media narrative on opposing Cop City and defending the forest.

The state's PR campaign started by co-opting progressivism, appropriating the image of Martin Luther King Jr. and the history of the Civil Rights era. They promised the project will provide jobs for its black population, and plan to name the police training facility the 'Institute for Social Justice'. This façade has been easily seen through by the majority of Atlanta's residents. For example, at one city council meeting 70% of attendees opposed the project, and a significant percentage of those supporting it were cops or connected to law enforcement. Unsurprisingly, the state's other strategy is to demonise and oppress protestors. When people started camping in the forest to stop it from being cleared, the companies involved in the project hired off-duty police officers as private security.
Fortunately, forest defenders were generally able to drive the cops and their destructive machines out. In multiple public street marches the cops have arrested and assaulted protestors and other civilians, and tasered one journalist. By punishing public dissent, they make secretive actions more popular. Unfortunately, at every step of this movement the police have reacted to the failure of their own violent escalations with more violent escalation.

The state has accused protestors of being 'outside agitators', using the rhetoric that they are from out-of-state and therefore out-of-touch radicals, who relocate to Atlanta to cause trouble for no good reason. This well-worn trope has been used previously by oppressors against the movement to abolish slavery and during the Civil Rights Era, and in the contemporary fight for racial justice against police brutality. The Atlanta authorities have claimed that some of the arrested protestors gave addresses from outside of the state. This is ignoring the fact that many in precarious economic situations need to move often, without a chance to officially change their address. Others may also choose not to give their official residence for a variety of reasons. But let's say that many of those arrested did come from other parts of the country to protest. The state is trying to build the largest police training facility in the country. It will teach cops across the nation and around the world how to enforce their oppressive status quo with brutal efficiency.

Deforestation accelerates global climate change, and the collapse of biodiversity also has global consequences. Similarly, gentrification, housing instability and wealth inequality are an attack on the entire working class. When we suffer the same forms of oppression, it makes sense for us to come to each other's aid and fight for a common cause. This is not "outside agitation." This is solidarity. And nothing terrifies the ruling class more than ordinary people fighting in solidarity with one another.

Even more alarmingly, the city's prosecutors started claiming that any involvement in the movement, including posting on social media, exposed activists to be charged with domestic terrorism. They also falsely claimed that the Department of Homeland Security classified the movement as a "domestic violent extremist group." When asked, the DHS responded that it does not classify movements. It similarly did not classify 'Antifa' as such at former President Trump's request. Regardless, the intention is clear. Declaring all dissent to the expansion of the powers of the state as 'Terrorism' is a precedent for totalitarianism. Declaring them a 'Terrorist Organisation' is an attempt to justify their deaths. The forest defenders have caused no harm to anyone. Their most destructive actions of the non-violent movement have been targeted property damage.

STOP
WORK

TRUCK THE POLICE

Clearly, the capitalist state values the property of the ruling class over the lives of the working class. But the accusation begs the question: If property damage is terrorism, what do you call destroying a forest?

After the failure of local police to drive the protestors from the forest, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp sent Georgia State Patrol to help illegally crush the movement. The Georgia State Patrol were inexperienced with protests in Atlanta, except for instances of brutality during the George Floyd Rebellion, where, among other actions, they launched tear gas canisters at people's heads. Their first raid was the morning of January 18th 2023, where they invaded the forest encampment with helicopters and police drones overhead, a K-9 unit, a bomb squad and all-black SUVs parked nearby. At 9:04am, a volley of approximately 30 shots were heard in the forest. The Georgia State Patrol had killed Manuel Teran, a queer Venezuelan anarchist of Tomoto-Cuica heritage, whose forest name was Tortuguita.

As the Georgia State Patrol did not turn on their body cameras until after the shooting, the whole truth of the killing may never be known. According to a police press conference, one of the officers was shot. They have refused to reveal any information about who they were or how they were shot. We don't know whether they shot themselves or were shot by another officer, or a forest defender acting in self-defence. A police video was released showing cops concerned about crossfire and another stating "You fucked your own officer up". The official police narrative has been jumbled and unclear.

At first they claimed the cops had been ambushed by a shooter. The Georgia Bureau of Investigations claimed agents had encountered someone in their tent, ordered them to exit, and then they fired "without warning" on the cops. With this story they released a photo of a hammock, not a tent, and not a place where one can hide. When people asked why no gun was shown in a press release of confiscated items such as fireworks, police later released a photo of a 9mm handgun. When asked why people should believe this random firearm belonged to Tortuguita, the police produced a bill of sale, well after the shooting occurred.

The police's constantly changing story, strategic omission of evidence, violent actions and extreme rhetoric all bring doubt to their public narrative. This would not be the first time police accidentally shot another officer and blamed it on the civilian they also killed. Regardless of the details, we know that the cops invaded the forest, surrounded Tortuguita and shot them.

Manuel 'Tortuguita' Teran was a 26-year-old queer and Indigenous Venezuelan, best described as "your friendly neighbourhood anarchist". They were also described as kind, funny, fierce, earnest, welcoming, helpful, and brave. They were an artist, an urban farmer, a shit-poster, a trained street medic, and were heavily involved in mutual aid and community building.

They had made the forest their home since May 2022, after losing their housing in Tallahassee, Florida. In Tallahassee they were known to be constantly strengthening their community, helping in labour organising through Industrial Workers of the World, providing mutual aid through Food Not Bombs and first aid through a street medic collective, among other endeavours. In the forest they were known to truly live their politics in even basic interactions.
They provided medical training, but more importantly brought fun and joy to their work. They were always checking in on people and offering to lend a helping hand. They always helped do the dishes and were always giving out fruit snacks. Tortuguita truly embodied the principles of the movement, a firm believer in the strategy of non-violence. They knew that the movement's greatest strength lay in its community support and winning the battle of public opinion.
Because of this, they were welcoming to less militant members of the movement, encouraging them to get involved in neighbourhood organising.
They lived life fully every day, constantly engaged in the struggle for liberation. Tortuguita was killed defending the forest and died doing what they loved. They live on in the hearts and minds of the people they interacted with and the community the helped build.

Rest in power, comrade.

For the next several hours, the police continued their raid, smashing camp infrastructure, pointing guns, verbally threatening people, and firing pepper balls into tree houses.
One tree sitter defiantly climbed higher and suspended themselves from a harness after their tree house was destroyed. For nearly 19 hours the police surrounded the activist until they surrendered and were arrested. Five people who survived the deadly assault were arrested and charged with domestic terrorism.
Afterwards, a memorial march had protestors attack buildings owned by companies and institutions that supported the construction of Cop City. The police assaulted and arrested protestors at random. In response, some protestors attacked a cop car, which spontaneously combusted. 18 protestors have now been charged with domestic terrorism, with a bail totalling over $100,000 USD.
As the wait time for a trial in Atlanta's so-called justice system is over a year, this is a clear tactic of repression. This is the first time anyone has been charged with domestic terrorism in Georgia since the law was expanded in 2015. This law was expanded in response to a terrorist attack where black parishioners were murdered by a white supremacist in Charleston, South Carolina. A law made with the stated purpose of racial justice has been used for the first time against a racial justice movement. This is yet another indication that the law is only used by the state to protect its own power and stability.

The fight to defend the Atlanta Forest is not only the concern of the people of Atlanta, or even the people of the United States. It is a smaller but significant part of the global struggle against oppression and the destruction of our planet. Deforestation has world-wide consequences, and the United States is part of a global network that produces police officers who aid in their control of the working class. The primary purpose of these police is to maintain the conditions that lead to the rich to dominate the poor, those with concentrated power to bend the will of those without.

If you are able, you can donate to the Atlanta Solidarity Fund and find out other ways to help the movement at defendtheatlantaforest.org.

For a more in-depth look at the movement I recommend the relevant episodes of the 'It Could Happen Here' podcast, and the Crimethinc article 'The Forest in the City'. To keep up to date with the movement you can follow them on twitter @defendATLforest.

Just as the systems dominating and destroying the planet and its inhabitants is global, so is the resistance to it. There are various struggles here in Australia against militarism, environmental destruction and oppression. They too, face police repression. Food for Thought will attempt to keep our readers informed on them in subsequent issues.

Meanwhile, in Atlanta, the state is failing to win over the public and is failing to crush the spirit of this non-violent movement with police brutality.
The domestic terrorism charges are the next step in escalation. The charges are quite ironic, because through them the state is wielding their most powerful weapon: Fear. Even with their army of militarised police, they know they can't beat us all, but they could scare enough of us into not acting. But it won't work. Despite the immense loss of Tortuguita, the forest defenders and the movement have not faltered.
The state's naked oppression has only created more resistance, and more defiant rebels. Defend The Atlanta Forest is a dynamic movement, which can and will adapt to anything the state throws at it.
Every day it becomes more and more apparent that the forest will never be destroyed, and that Cop City will never be built.

Love and Solidarity,

Capy Bara & Chuck Molotov.

Eco-Socialism or Eco-Fascism: The Inevitable Outcome

-Mikhael Erzengel

'As things stand today capitalist civilization cannot continue; we must either move forward into socialism or fall back into barbarism.'

Such were the words of Rosa Luxemburg, the beloved and maligned German revolutionary. In context, she was describing the inevitable outcome of Germany's participation in the First World War. Capitalist-induced imperialism and militarism threatened to annihilate Europe, and the only solution in her eyes was for society to instead pivot towards socialism and communism. In the end, Europe did not pivot; the First World War killed over 20 million people, and Europe was devastated. In the aftermath, fascism began to fester, and would eventually devastate Europe all over again.

Now, capitalist society once again faces a crisis: the ecological crisis. But while the ghouls of imperialism and militarism threatened the lives of hundreds of millions, the ecological crisis threatens humanity's very existence. Not just in the sense of making the environment physically unliveable, but also because it will (and already is) testing the limits of human economic and political structures. Even if humanity survives the physical threat of climate change, there will still be hundreds of millions of displaced people, massive food and water insecurity, and increased strain on infrastructure due to intense weather events. Crucially, these things will happen even if the core causes of the ecological crisis are addressed.

If all fossil fuel use was ended tomorrow, the domino effect of environmental collapse would still fall, even if in a slightly diminished capacity, causing challenges which must inevitably be dealt with.

It is those challenges which shape the new crisis of the 21st century, and just like the 20th century, humanity faces a choice, albeit on modified terms. Rather than the choice of 'socialism or barbarism', the new decision must be between eco-communism and eco-fascism. These are not just two of many different possibilities - they are in fact, the only two possible outcomes. We will slide towards one or the other eventually, and we must actively assert our political will if we hope for the outcome to be the one we want.

First, we need to define what eco-fascism is; it's not just Nazism with green aesthetics. To understand the philosophies which led to its development, we need to understand the convergence of the environmental and racial movements in wealthy countries. Historically, many people of the ruling class indulged in environmental protectionism. The earliest national parks in the United States were sponsored by figures like Teddy Roosevelt and Madison Grant, men who advocated for wilderness welfare as a side-hobby from their day jobs as American oligarchs.
But the notion of protecting the environment as envisioned by these men did not extend to protecting the rights of the Ahwahnechee people who had lived there for thousands of years. The vision of nature that they pursued was one separate from humanity, divided rigidly as if mankind were an aberration upon the soil, and not products of the environment ourselves. Humanity could only interact with nature by dominating it and pillaging it as a resource, or else by leaving it alone and untouched: an alienated landscape.

Madison Grant, one of the premier conservationists, would later write an infamously racist tome called 'The Passing of the Great Race', which postulated that the 'Nordic race' (vaguely defined as comprising French, German, British and Irish people) was inherently intellectually and physically superior, but was in danger of dying out.
In this work, Grant framed the Nordic people as being the outcome of centuries of Darwinist evolution which " imposed a rigid elimination of defectives"

due to the Western-European climate, as opposed to the inferior peoples of the Mediterranian or the Alps (he mercifully spared us all his thoughts on people outside of Europe). Grant essentially saw Western Europeans as an endangered species, due to migration and industrialisation. This reveals a bizarre dichotomy in Grant's thought; Europeans 'belong' to their environment, and are a product of their environment, while First Nations people in America were an imposition upon the land and had to be removed to 'protect' nature from their presence.

The work of these racial pseudo-scientists would have a great impact upon the developing fascist movement. Nazi-fascists used the rhetoric of 'blood and soil' to suggest that Germans were tied to the European ecosystem, and were therefore best equipped to exert 'natural order' upon the land. Again, the contradictory dichotomy leapt forth; the German race had a right to control and dominate the land their ancestors came from, but when the Hitler-stooges invaded Eastern Europe they exterminated the local populations, who apparently did not have the same rights over their own soil.

Here lies the ugly contradiction at the heart of eco-fascism: internally, the environment is to be protected from 'outsiders'; externally, however, resources belong to whoever is strong enough to claim them, the will of the local people be damned. Internal cleansing, external expansion and domination - the fascist mantra in microcosm.

In the modern context of ecological crisis, this dichotomy is only likely to become more pronounced. The American government, (already rife with fascist tendencies), has literally staged coups and sponsored openly fascist regimes in other countries in order to secure resources. In 2020, political unrest in Bolivia was theorised to have been fomented by American interests aiming to secure access to the nation's lithium mines. This theory was given credence by a passing comment from the future target practice dummy himself, Elon Musk: "We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it!" The fact that the United States empire is already so willing to undermine other countries to secure resources is a foreboding sign in a world where access to critical resources like arable land, fresh water, and rare earth metals is becoming increasingly precarious.

The Australian government, (basically fascist in all but name), has even been aggressive inside its own borders. Under the guise of Morrison's 'gas-led recovery', the land of the Gomeroi people has been cut apart and sold to fossil fuel companies, while Rio Tinto shamelessly vandalises thousands of cultural sites in the Pilbara. The action of First Nations people to resist has been suppressed by a police state which is enabled to conduct raids in regional towns to harass activists, and which breaks the spirit of local communities with resurrected apartheid-esque restrictions on movement and work. Even more disturbing is the government's response to humanitarian crises like the refugee crisis, (exacerbated by wars which Australia itself helped initiate). The Australian government already locks up asylum seekers in offshore concentration camps and threatens refugees on the mainland with deportation. Ask yourself: as the ecological crisis escalates and millions of people are displaced, how will the Australian state respond when those people seek safety on this continent? The most likely outcome is the escalation of armed border patrols, mandatory detention on an unseen scale in horrific conditions, and an increasingly tight hold on the movement of people in and out of the country. The potential for violence and abuse to erupt from any of these measures is unthinkable.

This is the shape of a capitalist future in the ecological crisis, and it's unfortunately the path that we are already heading down. As resources become more scarce and global infrastructure begins to fail, states will become even more cut-throat and ruthless in securing their interests, while inflicting even more cruelty on those who are catching the brunt of the storm.
The capitalist requirement for infinite growth and expansion will see the world become a global war-zone of technologically-advanced superpowers battling for supremacy over a dying planet, while the rest of us are forced to fight for scraps, while being terrorised by an ever-expanding police state. Fantasies about escaping to space, or discovering some market-based solution to the crisis, will be repeatedly proven to be nothing but a cruel mirage by billionaires playing with the unthinkable amounts of wealth that they have hoarded.
The eco-fascist state is the only possible outcome of a capitalist future.
'As things stand today, capitalist civilization cannot continue'.

The only solution is to fight back and avert the capitalist future.

When the choices are between socialism or barbarism, you can't just hope for socialism while sitting on your hands. You need to actively fight with every inch of your being, because the stakes are literally life and death, and every day brings us closer to the day when the choice will be made for us. When eco-fascism is the inevitable outcome of the current path, the only solution is to break away from the current path, and instead fight for eco-socialism and eco-communism.t

Marx believed that all wealth sprung from nature, in the form of natural resources. Under communism, the wealth of society is shared among all of humanity, which means under eco-communism, natural resources are to be the shared wealth of humanity. This means that we can no longer regard the natural world as something to be simply used. When the earth itself is shared property of society, then it must be maintained, protected, and cared for by the whole of society.
Many historical and modern First Nations communities understand that they themselves are a product and a part of the ecosystem, and that nature must be sustained, as by doing so, humanity is sustained. Civilisation can no longer pursue the goals of infinite growth and expansion at the cost of all else.
We can also no longer regard land and resources as 'ours' and belonging to us.
As the existing ecological crisis worsens and people face food and water shortages, we cannot hoard our own food and water, but must instead distribute them according to need, to those who need them most.
As refugees come fleeing from natural disasters and unlivable conditions, we cannot drive them away; we must accommodate them and ensure their needs are met.

It is becoming increasingly obvious to the young activists of today that our future is not something which we will inherit. It is something we must fight for, tooth and nail! Our futures have been stolen from us, stashed away in a dragon's hoard of treasure, in the form of debt, privately-owned stockpiles, and occupied land.

If we want to see a future which we can bear to live in, then we must claw back every inch of property and natural wealth. And since the ruling classes will not hand over their ill-gotten gains by choice, the only option is the path of revolution. I will not claim that it is a matter of communism or death - the truth is, if we do not choose communism, death is all that shall remain.

Recommended readings about this topic:

- 'Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future' by Joel Wainwright and Geoff Man (2018)
- 'The Rise of Ecofascism: Climate Change and the Far Right' by Sam Moore and Alex Roberts (2022)

by Mikhael Erzengel

Respect Existence or Expect Resistance

-Chuck Molotov

There's a spectre terrorising the planet, the spectre of climate change. It is being fed by the forces of Capitalism in an unholy alliance: Conservatives and Moderates, agricultural and extractive industries, manufacturing and finance, the United States, China, Russia and all of their allies.

Since the Industrial Revolution, the birth of Capitalism, we have been pumping carbon dioxide into the atmosphere at an ever accelerating rate.
The link between burning fossil fuels and climate change was first confirmed in 1977, by scientists employed by Exxon, now ExxonMobil, the largest oil and gas company in the world. The company, in order to protect its sacred profit, spent decades creating one of the most sophisticated propaganda campaigns in the world, to prevent effective climate action.
This is because the only effective climate action is the ceasing of their industry, extracting and burning fossil fuels.
Every day we don't act, more devastation is brought upon the inhabitants of Earth. If we don't transition our civilisation away from one that relies on fossil fuels, climate change will destroy it to the point where it cannot extract the necessary energy from any source, sending it and its inhabitants into a death spiral.
We cannot allow this to happen.

So. What is to be done?
Much has been said about the potential of technological solutions.

While there is now more renewable energy that powers our civilisation than ever before, it is still approximately the same percentage as it has been for decades. The core tenets of capitalism, competition and the pursuit of profits, means that businesses will burn fossil fuels in addition to adopting renewable energy. If the world's current energy current energy needs were fuelled by renewables, companies will still burn fossil fuels in their unrelenting quest to maximise profits.
Internationally, governments compete against each other for power, thus they are also incentivised to produce energy regardless of its source. The truth is that we have had renewable energy for as long as climate change has been known to the public.
This is a political problem, and it will require political solutions.

The political imagination of the masses has been shrunk so small that few options come to mind when most people wonder what they can do to avert climate catastrophe. Because of the neoliberal ideology of individualism, most people first think about reducing their individual carbon footprint. Use less plastic, change your light bulbs, buy an electric car, hell, even go vegan. On the surface these don't seem like bad ideas. Some of these actions do make a small difference, and targeted boycotts have been successful in the past. Unfortunately, the issue of climate change is so broad, and consumers have very limited power in today's economy, where power is concentrated in a few corporate cartels. In fact, the concept of the individual carbon footprint was invented by Exxon to avert responsibility from their own actions and the actions of the capitalist elite. The concept of individual action to solve a global problem is like averting a flood with a pebble. We need to build a dam.

Electoralism is also a common proposed, and attempted strategy. There's the issue that in representative democracies, citizens are rarely able to vote on single issues, and only then when elected representatives allow us to. But that's only the beginning of the problem. In our two party system, the neoliberal Labor Party and Liberal-National Coalition have the backing of practically all of capitalism and corporate media. Despite a nominally free press, there exists a system called Manufacturing Consent which incentivises the promotion of ruling class ideology and punishes dissent from it.

Even the publicly owned ABC is legally required to give attention to political parties based on their proportion of seats in parliament. Even if a party such as the Greens did overcome capitalist propaganda and win state and national elections on a platform of effective climate action, and they did attempt to fulfil their electoral promises, that would not be the end of the struggle. A hostile capital class could use their media influence and even enact a capital strike, disinvesting from the Australia economy and wreck economic havoc on the Australian people. In fact, the mining giants and the corporate press in Australia have already used their economic might to squash proposed carbon and mining taxes. This struggle is largely why the position of Australian Prime Minister was a revolving door for years until the absurdly pro-coal Scott Morrison was elected in 2018. So, it's clear that voting alone isn't an effective strategy when going against the ruling class.

That isn't to say that ordinary people don't try, and sometimes even succeed in influencing parliamentary politics and elections. At this point we approach the limits of what is considered 'acceptable' political action, what we call protest or activism. These are more accurately described as demonstrations, as people are demonstrating the popular support for or against certain issues or people. Mass demonstrations, preprepared with the government, marches guided by police, in areas politicians can safely ignore. At best, they can sway public opinion, but without further action we are met with the same roadblocks as electoralism.
During the Black Summer bushfires of 2019, millions of Australians inhaled ash for weeks, 450 people and over a billion animals died. In response, tens of thousands marched, demanding climate action. Fast forward 3 years later, and the Labor Party wins the election and passed a bill promising to limit carbon emissions by 43% of 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050. As it doesn't contain any actual policies to reach that target, it is, for now, an empty promise. Even if the Labor Party did manage to enact those policies, without future governments halting or reversing their progress by 2050 and beyond, this is still inadequate. If the world reduced carbon emissions at that rate, it would lead to an increase in global temperature of over 2 degrees celsius, well above the already compromised Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees.

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In fact, the Paris Agreement is already criticised by scientists for not being enough to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. The difference between 1.5 degrees warming and 2 degrees is catastrophic. Extreme weather, heat waves, crop losses, water shortages, diseases and poorer air quality will become disastrously worse. The full extent of the future impacts of climate change are best explained in The Uninhabitable Earth by David Wallace-Wells, a book which should drive any sensible person to demand immediate climate action.

It is clear that the continuation of 'acceptable' politics is morally irresponsible. Extinction Rebellion, also known as XR, have attempted using the strategy of non-violent civil disobedience through the tactic of mass arrest, popularised by Gandhi in the Indian Independence Movement and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. However, the expansion of the police state has made this tactic ineffective. Our governments introduce increasingly draconian anti-protester laws and have made an industry of mass incarceration. It has also become more difficult for ex-prisoners to gain employment, and more difficult to survive while unemployed.

Unfortunately, apathy seems to be the most common strategy for dealing with an increasingly uninhabitable planet. Many realise the futility of legal political actions and don't see the illegal actions as better options, if they consider them at all. Too many are kept occupied by the stresses of work one half of their day, and the other half distracted with a mind-boggling quantity of entertainment, consumer goods and recreational substances. Many believe at least one of the many lies put forward by the fossil fuel industry.
That climate change isn't happening, or isn't a big deal, or isn't caused by humans, or, the latest, lie, that the powers that be are doing everything that needs to be done, and no one needs to worry about it anymore. But if you are worried about it, have you considered buying a Tesla? There are even some of the more privileged in our society, I suspect, who don't doubt most of the latest scientific predictions, but think their money can shield them from the consequences.
Even those who are enriching themselves from our biosphere's destruction will come to realise that their money can only shield them so much.

Fortunately, while our future will be bleak, we can still choose our future, if not under circumstances of our own choosing. Capitalists pursue profits like a bloodhound. Their decision-making process is generally based on a fairly simple cost-benefit analysis. If you want them to stop doing something, such as extracting and burning fossil fuels, the most effective way is to make it unprofitable to do so. In a government context this has been suggested through policies such as carbon taxes and making renewable energy competitive. But for ordinary people, we need to provide disincentives through direct economic disruptions. All around the world, groups of ordinary people fight to disrupt the fossil fuel chain and keep fossil fuels in the ground. These groups have been dubbed Blockadia, a term popularised in Naomi Klein's book 'This Changes Everything', and have their origins in the Ogoni People's movement against Shell in Nigeria during the 1990s, which led to 9 Ogoni elders being killed.

they maintain a strong security culture and target chokepoints of fossil fuel capitalism. By doing so they can maximise economic damage to fossil fuel capitalists and minimise damage to themselves. In 2021 they disrupted the Port of Newcastle, the largest coal port in the world. The police retaliated indiscriminately, sentencing Eric to 12 months prison for climbing on a train, stole a woman's station wagon, which she had been living in, and raided the Hunter Community Environment Centre, despite having no connection to Blockade Australia or the action. While Eric was released on appeal, he is under strict curfew, banned from entering parts of New South Wales outside of his court dates, and faces further harassment by the police and corporate press. In May 2022 Blockade Australia had a similar action in Port Botany, where two German nationals were deported, and activist Maxim was jailed for four months for climbing a crane. Following the peaceful protest the NSW government increased the penalties for non-violent protest to 2 years in jail and a $22,000 fine.

Blockade Australia's most recent action in Sydney highlights the increased state repression in action. Even before their action started, their camp in Colo, NSW, they spotted two armed men in full camouflage spying on them. After being confronted, they still refused to identify themselves, tried and failed to play dead, said "We've been compromised." and ran to an unmarked car which had two other armed men, assaulting people as they fled.

They proceeded to speed straight into a dead end. Out of concern for their safety, Blockade Australia members approached the four thugs, who proceeded to drive into the peaceful campers. Like vermin, the police presence rapidly multiplied, sending a strike force of roughly 100 officers to raid the camp, detaining dozens for hours in a cold, wet field. They searched people's bodies and vehicles, and forced people, including the property owner, off the property without a chance to take their bedding, warm clothes or communications equipment. They also raided another camp, and arrested two people for camping, including 62 year old Ngemba elder Auntie Caroline, officially charged with 'intimidation and affray'. Overall, several people were arrested and released on extremely punitive bail conditions. This is a clear violation of the right of assembly, but police will continue to violate any and all rights until they face consequences for their tyranny. The NSW police and government are using the law as a bludgeon against effective activism.

During the actual week of action, starting in June 27, Blockade Australia felt further paramilitary violence, getting assaulted as they marched peacefully through the city, the cowardly police targeting women, which they are also known for assaulting outside of work hours. Mali, an activist who survived the flooding of Lismore twice, blocked the Sydney Harbour Tunnel by locking themselves in a car. After facing vitriol from the press, they were arrested, exiled from Sydney, and faced 2 years in prison under the new authoritarian anti-protest laws. Fortunately, the magistrate recently dropped all charges.

Blockade Australia's most recent action in Sydney was an odd one out compared to their other tactics, more similar to Extinction Rebellion. As a PR stunt, it certainly brought attention to their movement. The demonising press has limited the support they have received. Perhaps they aren't counting on the opinions of the masses. Because of the suffocating web capitalism weaves, most people won't risk arrest, even in part of a movement to save the planet. They may have correctly calculated that, at this time, gaining a small number of people committed to heroic acts of industrial sabotage is the best they can hope for. While their other actions directly against extractive capitalism will earn them more sympathy, it doesn't gain much attention, which is vital to sustain their movement.

I suppose I should address why I'm calling this 'their' movement. While I have no objections to their tactics, I have not engaged in them and have no immediate plans to do so. Regardless, I do believe that in order to build an effective climate justice movement, it will require an ecology of tactics. It will also require a mass movement. Perhaps, as the climate catastrophe unfolds, some may even decide that non-violent resistance won't go far enough.
I will refrain from talking further on this option, except to advise that the ends a social movement achieves are shaped by the means it uses.

In recent years annual climate strikes have occurred, largely led by student activists. Unfortunately, few workers actually participate in these strikes, and the unions don't join because solidarity strikes are illegal in this country. It would require a grassroots movement in multiple unions to have a chance. Even if they did this, a true general strike is incredibly difficult to organise.
We must build the necessary infrastructure now, a mutual aid network that can help the striking workers hold their heads above water until the ruling class folds to our demands. Fortunately, we can build these piece by piece.
The advantage of an ecology of tactics is that all ordinary people can contribute to the movement based on their capabilities. Some can get involved in workplace and tenant organising, others can set up mutual aid organisations.
Some can participate in blockades, while others provide economic support, legal defence to protesters and dispel the lies told about them by the capitalist press.
Regardless of your capabilities, we must organise and strike together to demand an end to the insanity that fossil fuel capitalism has imposed on us.

This will not be an easy task. We are up against multibillion dollar corporations and all the aspects of society they own: their corrupt politicians, their propagandist press, and their vicious attack dogs.

We will most likely even have to oppose collaborationist union bureaucrats and a reactionary counter-movement, led by those worried about losing their relatively privileged position in this crumbling society. They will tell us we're unrealistic, that we can't demand to change the world. And we're going to show them that if we have to choose between the end of the world and the end of capitalism, we can build a new world in the cracks of the old.

Solidarity Forever,

Chuck Molotov

The Australian Sex Workers Struggle

An interview with Charlotte Murphy, member of the Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association

Charlotte Murphy is a sexworker and trans rights activist who is a member of The Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association. Charlotte has been a tireless LGBTQI+ activist, from Pride in Protest's anti police and anti corporate sponsorship campaign in Mardi Gras to rallying against the discriminatory Religious Freedoms Bill. Charlotte has agreed to speak with Direct Action! about workers struggle amongst sex workers and as a member of Scarlet Alliance, though wishes to make clear that she is not a spokesperson for the Association.

What is the Scarlet Alliance and Sex workers' Association?

The Scarlet Alliance is a national organisation of sex workers in Australia and its membership is defined by the fact that the members are sexworkers or previous sexworkers. If you are any form of boss in the sex work industry, including a manager or even a receptionist at a brothel, you are not eligible for membership with the Alliance. It is an association of sex workers which in that way kinda looks like a union though it does not do industrial representation. What it does do predominantly is maintain a relationship with all the peer service networks by state: things like SWAP here in NSW, Respect in Queensland, Magenta in Western Australia, and a whole bunch of other groups. It's kinda like a connective tissue in a way for those orgs but also does a lot about education for sex workers, workshops, information that sex workers might need, as well as policy and legislative work - lobbying, I guess you can say, is that they try to win legislative change, both nationally and within states, with specific laws that concern sex work.

What gains have sex workers won in NSW and federally in the industry?

The first thing I would say is that the industry is the term I would use to describe what the bosses are doing so I don't really care about what personal gains that the industry would have made. As for the sex workers themselves, NSW has had forms of decriminalisation although some would argue that we don't have dull decriminalisation anymore but historically a number of things have happened in NSW that were changes to the law that happened before many other places in the world. In NSW one of the important things that was repealed and came after Mardi Gras was the repeal of the Summary Offences Act, I believe, under the Wran Government. When that was repealed it stopped the illegality of street work.

Street work was the first thing to be decriminalised in NSW and it was done by the end of the 1970s so we've had the decriminalisation of street work for a really long time - bar restrictions around schools and churches which are stupid but still do exist - but are otherwise legal.

It was then a really long process to actually get the brothels decriminalised as well. The decriminalisation of brothels and brothel operations actually didn't happen until the 90s so despite there being decriminalisation earlier, it was a long fight that was taken on by sexworker organisers to get the brothels decriminalised. Throughout that period of time there was a huge explosion both in Australia and internationally of what an actual sexworkers' rights movement looks like and a number of different organisations rose around the world. In NSW I believe there was an org called the Prostitutes Collective. At some point they actually had funding from the NSW Government and at one point managed by the state which eventually turned around and fucked them over. This is why sex workers in Australia are very clear about why they should only include sexworkers in their organisations as in the past bureaucrats have completely destroyed sexworker orgs in the past.

So while we've had decriminalisation in NSW for a long time including brothels being decriminalised for the past 30 years, which is excellent, there is still a number of things that are done by local councils around zoning which means that these councils can essentially shut brothels down or have them operate in a way they're technically not allowed to in the space so that private investigators are sent into unlicensed brothels to see if they're doing sexwork - a form of rape by deception, essentially.

So these problems still exist in NSW but historically huge amounts of wins has meant that the state is much safer so work is more than has been previously. At the moment Australia has seen a wave of decriminalisation by state. Victoria just passed its own form of decriminalisation and it's looking good for Queensland. We can't say for show but people are quietly hopeful that it's going to happen up there though I'm not going to jinx it. To have all 3 Eastern States have decriminalisation is going to make a huge difference.

In other states, such as South Australia, I have had clients use the police as a threat towards me in order to get all the money back that was paid to me for the job.

I had no choice but to give it to him because I knew that this was South Australia and if the police show up to the scene, they will take all my shit and will take me down no matter what happened in the interaction between me and this guy.

So across Australia it is uneven but the power and the strength of the organisations that have gone in the past and the continuing strength of the Scarlet Alliance has all the peer services in different states is just incredible and I think is unique to Australia in just how strong those relations are. It's pretty exciting to be a sex worker in Australia in that sense - we have to take them as we have them.

The Australian Sexworkers Association is made up entirely of former or current sexworkers to the exclusion of management

You mentioned both the terms legalisation and decriminalisation, could you give us your run down of both, what they are, their similarities and differences between them?

I wouldn't say that the similarities are worth mentioning because I think it just confuses people - the best way to describe it is to just say that legislation is another form of criminalisation by a different name. When we're looking at decriminalisation as it is in Victoria and as it happens in Queensland, they would say we're not operating we're not operating under a criminal model, they would say that the state is functioning under a legislation model. The way that Queensland's legislation model functions at the moment basically makes the majority of sexwork operate illegally in the state.

For example, when I go up to work in Queensland, if I'm working in a hotel and there is another worker in that hotel who is working in the same hotel which could be hosting 30 stories and I'm not aware that they're working there, I am technically working illegally. Under the law, that hotel would be considered a brothel as two workers are working there at the same time as the law defines it. Which means if I had operated illegally I would have no idea that was the case.

Legalisation, especially in Queensland, a whole set of things are criminalised by the law which fall on the wrong side of legalisation in a sense of you aren't a licensed brothel you cannot do this whole set of things and the same things are integral to your safety as a sex worker. If you work from your apartment you can't work with other sex workers in that apartment for your own safety. You can't even call or text another sex worker around your safety if you require it in your own place.

These are basic tools that sexworkers use to keep themselves safe in dangerous situations. Because of these legalisation models that want to pretend to the public that they are moralistically making sure sex workers are doing the right thing in brothels or whatever that they have to legislate them and regulate. They produce these definitions of brothels that mean that most people are working illegally and the reason why I say illegally is because they're not working safely.

That is inevitably what legalisaiton does, it creates unsafe working conditions because as soon as sex workers are on the wrong side of the law, they do not have protections against their clients and do not have protections against the police themselves. In Queensland they have something called the Prostitution Enforcement Task Force - which makes it sound like they're enforcing prostitution, it's very weirdly titled - who operate stings and raids around sexwork spaces made illegal by how the law operates there.

Decriminalisation on the other hand says that actually you as the worker are always entitled to having protections as a worker no matter what your status is and really that is the understanding of what labour rights should be; of how we should treat all workers. It's very much the same when it comes to, say, migrant rights and why sex workers care so deeply about them - as many sex workers are migrants. It's the same with how migrant work works - the reason why migrant workers are exploited and abused is because of this horrible legal system that we have. It restricts their ability to work and as it restricts their ability to work, it restricts their ability to fight for their own rights and their own right under existing industrial relations laws in Australia.

We shouldn't discriminate.workers as to who gets the right to work safely and to have access to bodies that arbitrate that in our society, even as imperfect as they are, is at the heart of what decriminalisation is.

Charlie Murphy at the Oxford St takeback Protest Mardi Gras, 2021

What other issues do workers in the NSW sex work industry still face and what is to be done about them?

With NSW sex workers' councils are a perennial problem for acting to shut down sex work that may be operating in their area but again, we wee when society goes through waves of sensible legal change to rights for workers that illegal things still happen all the time such as wage theft, bosses being bad actors and such still happen.

It is technically illegal for a manager to not provide sex safe materials for the workers that work there. However any sex worker that has had experience with working in basically any brothel in NSW knows that if you ask your manager for condoms for a job, they will charge you for it.

Brothel managers will ask for shift fees. So because you're a precarious worker, you're technically not treated as a contracted employee with that manager in any sense, shift fees are when you go to work, you have to pay the brothel a certain amount of money just to be there for your shift. If you don't have any jobs or it is a very slow night that you go into work - and you;re not guaranteed jobs as the client chooses who they want to see - you could end up being $50 poorer for having gone into the brothel because the manager is going to charge you for having the option of having you as a worker.

Those kind of predatory behaviours by sex work bosses are absolutely rife throughout the industry. I think the most egregious things that sex worker bosses do in brothels is allow dangerous clients to return. Brothel managers don't have an interest in keeping girls protected from rough clients, clients that commit sexual assault, because they can be big spenders and they can always return.

I have heard really horrible stories of either managers or owners mishandling situations to outright being fully aware of what is going on and yet keep sending new girls for these clients to abuse, basically.

This kind of stuff happens because there is a perverse incentive for bosses and managers. There's a difference between those kinds of problems and the problems that private workers face. Private workers get bad comments when utilising tools like Ugly Mugs, which aren't always perfect to use.

This is the next step around organising, dealing with bad bosses, and we don't yet have a union that can go in and industrially represent us in decasualising the industry and actually getting some form of agreement and muscle pushing back against bosses.

The Scarlet Alliance organises existing peer support networks to ensure the conditions and safety of their members.

How have sex workers been able to organise and what does that look like?

I think that our peer services and Scarlet Alliance as an organisation is a clear example of what sex worker organising looks like. To my understanding, this is similar to how most organising happens around the world.

It's predominantly focused on legislative change because that is the most immediate barrier. I don't want to make this false difference between changing the law and having a worker's union that is addressing bosses because for sex workers there is a trifecta of evil individuals acting badly against sexworkers: the state, bosses and clients. At any one time we're organising differently to deal with any one of those antagonists, essentially to organise around our own health and safety is a legacy of queer and sexworker organising during the AIDS epidemic and I think it's amazing to see the grass roots info sharing as well as institutional action Monkeypox has been a really simple that sex workers organise.

Sexworkers organise so naturally already with eachother in sharing information with each other, sharing safety tips and sharing safety networks that there's always the grassroots organisation as a general basis that we don't actually have to try very hard to consciously make those things happen and then having peer services that are going out to brothels and speaking to street workers. They contact a huge amount of workers in order to help them conduct their work safely, having an influence and having a say on legislation through orgs such as Scarlet Alliance are hugely important. We just need a registered union now, basically.

How does the struggle that sex workers have fit into the wider workers' struggle?

For me this shouldn't even be a question, you know? It should be obvious that we are workers as well and no work is essentially treated as exceptional in the way sex work is. Yet it is because there is a legacy of moralism that will appear in certain strains of working class thinking.

So many groups are so preoccupied with the question of abolition and I think it's the wrong question to ask around the abolition of this industry. Some people have compared it to the fossil fuel industry, you'd want to shut down the fossil fuel industry. If I wanted to go out and walk onto the street and be a coal miner, how do I just go out and propose to be a coal miner to someone. Of course I can't do that! There are a huge amount of things that I require for me to work as a coal miner.

However, as long as we have a wage system and as long as I have my pussy or my arsehole I can go out and sell it. At the heart of the problem is that we have a wage labour system and so many people can't see through all the moralism of the legacy of sex work in state socialist countries and its effect on people's thought processes and its general criminalisation in liberal democracies and elsewhere.

It is a problem of wage labour. We live in a system of wage labour and everyone's got some sexual organs and if at some point they're going to need to make some cash and that is available to them. If we're not abolishing wage labour yet, we're fighting for the rights of workers. That seems to be obvious for every other type of worker that we have, we know it's correct that we fight for their safety in their workplace yet for sex workers it still seems to be a confusing question for people which is very annoying.

What do you foresee the future of the sex work industry and what role should worker organisation play in it?

I don't know what I see for the future of it. It's hard to say, I can say what I ideally want and I can say what certain thing I can see happening.

In Australia I hope that this positive trend of decriminalisation across states continues. I mean we had decriminalisation in Northern Territory so that's 3 states out of 7 which is pretty incredible. If Australia as a whole is operating under a general consensus that decriminalisation is the right thing for sex workers then that is going to be reasonably difficult for reactionary forces to reel back.

Unfortunately, for different places around the Western world there is a backlash towards sex work in the form of the Nordic model that's taking hold of a number countries. It was just passed in Spain and it's been present in France for a while and Sweden, obviously, who have been shocked, apparently, with the election of the far right.

I think the general backlash towards sexwork in places where it has taken off is places where reactionaries have in a sense got a foothold and liberal feminists have basically been the feminist face of that reaction. We see anti-gender idealogues become very powerful with their backlash against trans people, backlash to sex work, anti abortion advocacy, all that controlling of women's reproductive labour and all the casualties that are collateral to all of that which include trans people and sex workers - this is the thing that I'm most concerned about. That these forces are going to make more advances around the world and make advances in Australia.

I don't think that that kind of rad-fem far-right communication is working as well as it is in other countries. I think it's much more advanced and much more powerful in places in Europe and America so I hope that Australia can actuallyhold out and make it clear that sex work is about the workers rights of Women. That all women who work in whatever industry they do move in solidarity rather than bicker. This is what I hope will happen but reactionary forces are moving to divide up the way people think about solidarity and cleaving sex workers away from other women and other women workers or trans people from general workers is the clear part of their strategy.

There are good things happening in Australia specifically but there are scary things around the world so I couldn't say what will happen but I can say what is necessary is worker solidarity and worker solidarity for queer people and women who work. I hope these changes around decriminalisation and building a worker's movement will be part of that.

Industrial Workers of the World Website